



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety
and Inspection
Service

Washington, D.C.
20250
JAN 31 2003

Mr. Patrick J. Rogan
Chief Veterinary Officer
Department of Agriculture and Food
and Rural Development
Kildare Street
Dublin 2
Ireland

Dear Mr. Rogan:

Enclosed is a copy of the final report of the Food Safety and Inspection Service's (FSIS) July 16 through August 1, 2002, on-site audit of the Republic of Ireland's meat inspection system. We received your January 2, 2003, letter which provided comments on the draft final report. We have included this letter in the final audit report as Attachment "G."

During this audit, the FSIS auditor reported several concerns about Ireland's meat inspection system including inadequate implementation of 1) Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (SSOP), 2) Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) systems, and 3) laboratory operating procedures. Additionally, Establishment No. 300 was removed from the list of establishments certified to export to the United States.

We appreciate the actions taken by the Government of Ireland to immediately rectify the deficiencies cited during the audit including the corrective actions and preventive measures taken at the four establishments cited with 30-day notices. We acknowledge the follow-up inspections to these four establishments by your regional staff to verify the establishments' compliance with FSIS procedures. Regarding the delisting of Establishment 300, we have noted that this establishment does not have immediate plans to reapply for certification.

We appreciate your thorough review of the FSIS audit findings and the kind remarks regarding the professionalism of the FSIS auditor and the assistance he provided to your colleagues. It is this type of working relationship that helps enhance the equivalence of our food regulatory systems. If you have any questions regarding the FSIS audit, please contact me at telephone number 202-720-3781, facsimile number 202-690-4040 or email address sally.stratmoen@fsis.usda.gov.

Sincerely,

Sally Stratmoen, Acting Director
Equivalence Staff
Office of International Affairs

Enclosure

cc:

Aingel O'Donoghue, First Secretary, Embassy of the Rep. of Ireland, Washington, DC

Peter Kurz, Minister Counselor, U.S. Embassy, London

Michael Hanley, Agriculture Attaché, FAS, U.S. Embassy, Dublin

John Wilson, Area Officer, FAS

Norval Francis, Minister-Counselor, US Mission to the EU in Brussels

Joerg Niederberger, Agric./Consumer Affairs, EU Mission to the U.S.

Amy Winton, State Department

Linda Swacina, Associate Administrator, FSIS

Donald Smart, Director, Review Staff, FSIS

Karen Stuck, Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator, OIA, FSIS

Sally Stratmoen, Acting Director, ES, OIA, FSIS

Steve McDermott, ES, OIA, FSIS

Clark Danford, Acting Director, IEPS, OIA, FSIS

Country File-Rep. of Ireland (FY 2002 Audit)